

## **There's a lot that goes into delivering all that jazz**

**7 April 2016**

The Cape Town International Jazz Festival (CTIJF) is rightly regarded as amongst one of the best in the world, attracting top international and local artists and more than doubling attendance since it started 16 years ago.

Over 35,000 festival attendees flocked to the Cape Town International Convention Centre (CTICC) this past weekend for Africa's Grandest Gathering of jazz not just for the exceptional entertainment but also a world-class hospitality experience. Preparation began months before and one of the first tasks was to ensure that there is adequately trained staff to deliver another successful event.

"To be successful, an event of this size required a huge number of people, all of whom have the right combination of knowledge and skills essential to achieve our common goals and purpose. Importantly the training they are given and expertise they develop working in such a high-pressure environment provides invaluable experience for their future careers," says Julie-May Ellingson, Chief Executive Officer of the CTICC.

The number of waiting staff was increased to 440, most of whom are trained in service delivery, customer interaction and product knowledge. The majority of food and beverage staff are recruited from a number of hospitality training schools and provides an invaluable opportunity to get hands-on training.

Similarly an additional 500 bar staff are required to tend the bars throughout the festival many of these recruited and trained specifically for this event, learning beverage, mixology and guest interaction skills.

The kitchen team was also expanded to 200 staff, including trainee chefs, food-service assistants and qualified chefs. Most are drawn from community partners including the Mitchells Plain School of Skills, False Bay College and Iziko Cooking and Training Centre. They learn a variety of food processes and culinary skills which are applied in the CTICC kitchens during the festival.

During the festival the catering team prepared and cooked approximately 1750kg of lamb, 1250kg of chicken breasts and 950kg of thighs and drumsticks. Our menu also included 1380kg of fish which are all on the SASSI green list and are sustainably caught.

Over 1600kg of vegetables were purchased which were peeled in order to reduce waste. Off-cuts are composted and the compost is donated to one of our community partners, Abalimi Bezekhaya, who use this compost to grow vegetables. The CTICC in turn purchases these vegetables from Abalimi Bezekhaya, thereby creating a virtuous cycle which not only provides the CTICC with products but more importantly empowers the community and creates jobs.

For festival goers with a sweet tooth, the pastry chefs produced more than 45,000 cakes and petit cakes, 450 litres of ice-cream and prepared approximately 800kg's of fruit.

"The success of this event over the past 16 years has entrenched Cape Town as a festival and entertainment destination, but more importantly the opportunities it provides ensure that the people of Cape Town continue to benefit long after the last guest has gone home," says Ellingson.